



Sea Save Foundation 2014



This year has been full of irony. We have seen an exponential increase in support for shark protection legislation. There is growing awareness about the atrocities of shark finning, and sales for shark fin soup have dramatically plummeted in China. Contemporaneous to these positive trends, we are seeing mainstream conservationists question the vision of John Muir and suggest that we may no longer be able to "indulge in the luxury of wide open spaces." If the importance of such places as Yosemite and the Grand Canyon are being questioned and conservation leaders are advocating that we shift resources to the development of urban parks and access road implementation, what will this mean for our oceans?

Garnering support for marine ecosystem protection has always been challenging, because most people have never been afforded the opportunity to dive or visit these communities. Even SCUBA divers have barely scratched the surface. There has never been a more pivotal time to act. We urgently need to convince people that the oceans are worth protecting. We must ride the recent momentum of shark fin awareness to ensure the protection of species while confronting global challenges in international policy creation, poaching enforcement, climate change education and much more.

Please take a few minutes to review this report. We are forging ahead with current campaigns and launching new ones. Our volunteer team has never been as skilled or driven. We are creating strategic partnerships and capturing the eyes of the media, celebrities and influencers. Sea Save Foundation has a proven track record. We are passionate, we are effective, and we are turning the tide of apathy and lack of awareness. Thank you for being our partners in this effort, for being part of the solution, and for making our successes possible.

"Bring it, 2015. We've got this!"



Director, Sea Save Foundation

Impact Statement: *Sea Save Foundation strives to protect our oceans by raising awareness about the beauty of marine ecosystems and their fundamental importance to human survival. We seek solutions, advance public policy, and drive advocacy.*





Contents

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ CITES Petition and 2015 Meeting
- ❖ Big Blue Town
- ❖ Give 'Em the Fin
- ❖ Wins for Fins: Mapping Our Global Success
- ❖ Voice of Cocos Island
- ❖ Week in Review
- ❖ BLUE Film Festival and Conservation Summit: Supporting Patrons
- ❖ Whale Entanglement Team Members
- ❖ Coral Seeding Pilot Project



CITES Outreach and Petition

Need: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) plays a critical role in protecting endangered species. This international agreement between governments establishes a consensus about which animals should be monitored or removed from international trade. At conferences held every three years, member nations review scientific data and vote whether to place animals on appendices that determine how they may be harvested and traded. The policy established at these conferences can have a significant impact on the health and future of endangered marine species.

At the 2013 CITES conference in Bangkok, Thailand, Sea Save Foundation helped negotiate groundbreaking policy changes to protect seven shark and ray species. This was the first time that commercially valuable and widely traded shark species were included under these protections. However, five nations filed reservations, indicating that they will not abide by the provisions. By ignoring the international consensus, these countries are undermining the value of CITES and endangering all species that the global committee is attempting to protect.

Public perception is vital to this issue. Leaders of member nations risk being misjudged by the public when they courageously support shark conservation measures. We must ensure that CITES policy is enforced and that the public is educated about the importance of protecting endangered marine species.

Description: Sea Save Foundation's current approach to CITES is twofold. We are gathering signatures for a petition urging President Obama to apply trade sanctions against Japan, Yemen, Guyana, Denmark, and Iceland for refusing to adhere to the CITES decision. We are also continuing our educational efforts, spreading the message that leaders who support shark conservation are relying on scientific data to advocate responsible positions that will protect the ocean for future generations.

As we prepare for the 2016 CITES conference in South Africa, we are reviewing which endangered species will require future protection and will continue to educate the public about CITES, shark finning, and the vital role of these marine species.

Audience: Decision makers and the international community

Evaluation/Impact: International agencies such as Interpol are enforcing international trade restrictions, and the European Union has pledged substantial funding to help implement the new standards.

Status: Ongoing



www.seasave.org

Big Blue Town

Need: When the movie *Jaws* premiered in 1975, it shifted public opinion and created international hysteria about sharks and the ocean. Our challenge is to use an entertaining production to introduce an alternative perspective and reveal misconceptions about sharks that persist to this day.

Description: Nashville-based country singer Stephanie Quayle wrote and recorded the song “Big Blue Town” after spending time with Sea Save Foundation learning about ocean conservation and SCUBA diving. The song uses metaphor to explain the importance and plight of her finned cowboy, who keeps his big blue town (the ocean) safe. One night he “puts his life on the line,” after which schools of fish and other marine life disappear. This creative approach to explaining the critical importance of sharks as an apex predator drives home the point that sharks have an essential role in our marine ecosystems.

Sea Save Foundation produced a music video for “Big Blue Town” using vibrant underwater footage from around the world, with topside sequences shot in Grand Cayman. The video, produced and directed by Georgienne Bradley, edited by Emmy award-winner Kelly Coskran, and incorporating the videography of Jay Ireland, was nominated for two awards at BLUE Ocean Film Festival 2014. This production will be submitted to future film festivals as a way to start conversations and build awareness.

“Big Blue Town” is a novel tool that offers us the opportunity to reach into new demographics and start conversations in circles where the problem of shark finning remains invisible. The topic of shark finning, and its threat to our global fisheries, is new to most of the world’s population. With this video we are creating media awareness.

Audience: All music lovers, and particularly country music fans

Evaluation/Impact: This campaign will be evaluated based on a) the number of views the video receives on YouTube, b) the number of successful iTunes downloads, and c) careful examination of Google Analytics. We will also use the video to launch public educational talks. The song will be used to capture attention for lectures, shark seminars, and other educational venues.

Status: In Progress

BIG BLUE TOWN



AWARD NOMINEE

**BEST USE
OF MUSIC**

**BLUE OCEAN
FILM FESTIVAL**

2014

AWARD NOMINEE

BEST SHORT FILM

**BLUE OCEAN
FILM FESTIVAL**

2014

Give 'Em the Fin!

Need: Every year, tens of millions of sharks are killed for their fins. Shark finning is a cruel and unsustainable practice that involves cutting the fins from live sharks and dumping the animals back into the ocean, where they sink to the bottom and suffocate. While only a few countries consume shark fins, an essential ingredient in shark fin soup, they command a high price at market, and fishermen around the world are trying to meet the demand for this lucrative catch.

Sharks are an apex predator. When the ecosystem is balanced, sharks eat the sick and genetically altered individuals in fish schools. The current imbalance in many marine ecosystems is dangerous. Without sharks, genetic pools are weakened, and sickness can spread quickly through entire fisheries. This could cause widespread devastation, because many developing countries rely heavily on fish as a main food resource.

Description: Give 'Em the Fin is a clever, simple tool designed to a) raise awareness and initiate dialogue about shark finning b) engage the international community in a fun, creative, inexpensive way and c) apply international pressure on the finning industry, decision makers, and individual consumers of shark fin soup. The beauty of this campaign is that anyone can participate, and everyone can have their voices heard, from celebrities in the U.S. to children in Tonga.

People from around the world can take pictures of an individual, group, or pet with a hand held over their head (depicting a fin) to symbolize shark support. These images are immediately incorporated into a custom-made photomosaic. This interactive and engaging process capitalizes on social media trends. Once completed, the mosaic will be displayed in key spots around Asia with the message, "Be Part of the Global Picture - Say 'No' to Shark Fin Soup." The original watercolor image for the mosaic was graciously painted and donated by artist Phil Coles.

Audience: International and general population

Evaluation/Impact: We will measure the traffic for this campaign through tweets using the Twitter hashtag #GiveEmFin and Google Analytics. Once the picture mosaic is complete, we will place strategic billboards in countries that still consume shark fin soup.

Status: In progress



Wins for Fins: Mapping Our Global Successes

Need: Individuals working in environmental conservation are constantly bombarded by bad news about the condition of our oceans. While it's true that there are increasing challenges, our efforts to raise awareness about shark conservation and the ills of shark finning are gaining momentum. We are turning a corner, and it is essential that we recognize how much progress we have made.

Description: Our Wins for Fins Map will collate and present all the successes achieved through the collective efforts of marine scientists, industry leaders, policy influencers, and nonprofit organizations like Sea Save Foundation. As we work tirelessly for this effort, it will feel good to see all of our successes in one place.

The Wins for Fins Map will be pinned with international and private sector victories from across the globe, such as the establishment of protected shark sanctuaries, regional and national finning bans, and airlines that have banned shark fin cargo. Visitors will be able to use the map to discover the status of shark conservation efforts in their regions and determine which regions still need stronger shark protection. The interactive map will feature exclusive interviews, blog posts, videos, and more.

Audience: International community, particularly teachers and students

Evaluation/Impact: Google Analytics will be used to determine how many people are interacting with the map. We will have a student-geared pop-up on the map that states, "If you make use of this resource or find it useful, please send us a copy of your report."

Status: Ongoing



Voice of Cocos Island

Need: Cocos Island is a Costa Rican National Park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site of established importance to all humanity. It is one of the few places where healthy populations of sharks and other marine megafauna are thriving. It is pristine, and serves as a natural laboratory for un-impacted ecosystems and endemic species. This island has served as the inspiration for both Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*.

Cocos Island has maintained its pristine environment largely due to its distance from coastal Costa Rica and the fact that its sheer cliffs are unfriendly to building and any possible development. Yet this same remoteness muffles the island's calls for help when poaching and other problems strike.

Description: Sea Save Foundation leaders have been working at Cocos Island since the early 1990s, when they first documented shark finning. Working closely with then President Jose Maria Figueres, they advocated and received increased protection for the island. They contributed to the third and final petition that won United Nations World Heritage status for the island, and they accompanied the UNESCO team at Cocos Island during the site visit.

Today, Sea Save Foundation continues to work closely with Cocos Island leadership to raise awareness and to curtail illegal poaching and shark finning. By developing our Voice of Cocos Island blog and outreach program, we will bridge the divide between the island and the outside world, giving the island a voice that can be heard around the globe while maintaining a small tourism footprint.

Audience: Cocos Island park guards, the population of Costa Rica and an international audience

Evaluation/Impact: Google Analytics will be our metric for blog readership. We will continue to apprise an international audience about Cocos Island research, creativity, threats, laws, and funding opportunities that will help the island continue to resist development.

Status: Ongoing



Social Media and “Week in Review”

Need: If we want the public to care about the ocean and take action to protect it, we must ensure that they are informed. We cannot wait to educate until action is required. Social media is an essential platform for engaging and educating the public so they are ready to support policy that will protect endangered species and vital habitats. Facebook and Twitter provide fast, effective ways to reach constituents, evoke reaction, and invite participation.

Description: Sea Save Foundation produces a regular news piece called “Week in Review” which allows readers to see at a glance what is happening around the world in ocean conservation. Our editor, armed with her Stanford master’s in Environmental Studies, scours the news each week in search of relevant ocean news and creates summaries for our “Week in Review” which is delivered weekly to our subscribers and Facebook fans. Our summaries communicate essential points, with the option to read more from credible, vetted news and primary sources. Over the last few months, our “Week in Review” has covered stories about Sea World’s plummeting sales, the U.N. climate summit, and the creation of the world’s largest marine reserve.

Our social media strategy involves a wide variety of other platforms and tools. We publish original articles on our blog, videos on YouTube, campaign updates and inspirational images on our Facebook timeline, and connect with movers and shakers across industries on LinkedIn. We will continue to push into new e-markets and explore new ways to communicate.

Audience: Worldwide audience

Evaluation/Impact: We are able to monitor members, followers, and subscribers on our social media platforms. Additionally, by incorporating Google Analytics, we can further monitor visitors to our pages and analyze their interests and participation. We are trending higher every week, currently reaching Facebook impressions as high as 75,000 per post.

Status: Ongoing



BLUE Ocean Film Festival and Conservation Summit: Supporting Patrons

Need: Every two years ocean leaders, filmmakers, photographers, scientists, explorers, and entertainment executives gather in Florida at BLUE to honor the best in ocean filmmaking, to learn more about the issues facing our oceans, and to collaborate on improving the future of our oceans and humanity. These creators and leaders in the environmental world possess different strengths and backgrounds, but at BLUE they join together to discuss great ideas. Topics include shark finning, plastic pollution, deep sea exploration, aquarium ethics, and innovative conservation strategies ranging from seahorse farming to oil spill collection. This week-long event is funded by sponsors and donors.

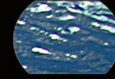
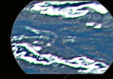
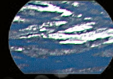
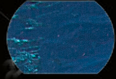
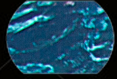
Description: We strongly believe in the BLUE Ocean Film Festival mission, “To use the power of film, photography, entertainment and science to educate, empower and inspire ocean stewardship around the globe.” Film has always been an integral part of the Sea Save Foundation mission, so we are proud to support this effort as foundation patrons. The strategic relationships we form at BLUE, with public figures as diverse as Jeremy Irons, Celine Cousteau and former President Mohamed Nasheed of the Maldives, are part of the web of supporters Sea Save strives to form to honor our mission.

Audience: Strategic partners and Sea Save Foundation

Evaluation/Impact: Strategic partnerships are continuously reviewed for opportunities to further the Sea Save mission. The impact of these relationships can enhance our education and advocacy work to help protect our oceans.

Status: Ongoing

(c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation (c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation (c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation (c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation



(c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation (c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation (c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation (c) Jay Ireland - Sea Save Foundation

Whale Entanglement Team - Participation (WET)

Need: Every year thousands of whales die after becoming entangled in delinquent fishing gear, including nets, long lines, and traps. The most common cetaceans to become entangled are humpback whales, which can suffer serious injury, starve, or drown. In some regions, one out of every two humpback whales shows signs of entanglement. One study found that entanglement was the leading cause of death for large whale species between 1970 and 2009.

Description: WET is a team of 30-plus volunteers assembled and trained for the purpose of disentangling whales. Sea Save Foundation members are active participants in this cooperative effort. In October 2014 we helped free four humpback whales from entanglement and documented the process.

Audience: Concerned citizens, California cetaceans

Evaluation/Impact: We will participate in the disentangling process. We will also document every aspect of the journey so that our imagery can stand witness to the serious effects of orphan lines and other debris on whales. Our media will also be used for teaching purposes. As every whale saved is a victory, we will study strategies to prevent entanglement.

Status: Ongoing



Coral Seeding Pilot Project

Need: Around the world, coral reefs are being lost as a result of climate change, pollution, destructive fishing practices, and other stresses. Healthy coral reefs host a vital diversity of plant and sea life and provide shorelines with essential protection from tides and waves. The loss of coral reefs has widespread environmental and economic impacts, but coral reseeded efforts can restore damaged reefs.

Description: For our pilot coral restoration project, Sea Save Foundation was delighted to support the creative efforts of SCUBA shops in Bali, Indonesia, to reseed lost coral ecosystems on underwater Hindu statues. The reseeded corals are healthy, growing quickly, and fast becoming the foundation of a robust new marine community. The restored reef will serve as a nursery for juvenile fish and will fund itself by attracting dive tour groups to the area.

Audience: Local Balinese divers, tourist divers, and the fish community

Evaluation/Impact: We will evaluate scuba divers' level of interest in visiting the reseeded coral reefs of tropical Bali, Indonesia. We are not only seeding a coral reef, home to the next generation of mature sea life; we are also seeding a tourism model to show that you can do well by doing good. If successful, this project could serve as a coral reef reseeded model applicable in other coral communities.

Status: Ongoing

